**Assassination of Abraham Lincoln**

The moans of the wounded and the stench of death filled the air as I made my rounds at the field hospital on the outskirts of the capital, near the fish market. The action of the war was waning, but there were still many soldiers in critical condition from the final days of fighting. I was examining a young private from Massachusetts, barely 17 years old, when the courier raced into the ward and handed me the note. I dropped the note to the floor and my stethoscope pinged off the patient’s bed as I reached for something on which to steady myself. I felt like I was punched in the gut as I read that the president was shot.

I quickly tried to gather my thoughts and bolted from the room, raced down the stairs about three steps at a time, and surveyed my surroundings for transportation. I was at a house on Twelfth Street, about a mile and a half from Ford’s Theater. Time was critical, and even at my fastest sprint, I may not make it on time. My only option was a general’s horse, hitched at a post as he visited his brother who was recovering from an ugly minnie ball wound to the stomach. I untied the horse, climbed up, jarred it in the ribs with my feet, and sped off to the president.

The horse’s hooves pounding the cobblestone pavers sounded like a Gatling gun, the sound echoing of the brick row houses that lined the street. Even though the rider was foreign to him, he cruised along, as if he knew where to go. As we reached our turn at Constitution Avenue, a street sweeper pulled his cart into the intersection. The steed made a clever leap, narrowly averting disaster.